



November 1, 2005

MICHIGAN
DENTAL
HYGIENISTS'
ASSOCIATION

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Good Morning Chairman Gaffney and members of the House Health Policy Committee:

My name is Bonnie Nothoff. I am the Director of Governmental Affairs for the Michigan Dental Hygienists, a registered dental hygienist of 22 years and Past President of this Association. My testimony is in support of HB 5025, a bill that includes, rather than excludes, registered dental hygienists from the need to take pain and symptom management as part of their continuing education. This bill in the form of SB 502 passed the Senate with a large majority on September 15, 2005.

Pain management is part and parcel of what the dental hygienist is and does on a daily basis with every patient. When you visit your dental hygienist you know that she is going to provide you with the utmost care and is sensitive to your needs and to your fears about pain. Registered dental hygienists have always considered "pain management" as a part of the curriculum. When anyone sits in the chair of the hygienist, all have the same concern--"Don't hurt me!"

We, as hygienists, know this is a concern of all patients and we treat all patients with the same sensitivity we would hope to be treated with ourselves.

With the advent of the administration of local anesthesia and nitrous oxide analgesia, we believe even more, that the public health code should reflect mandatory continuing education in pain management for our profession. The amount is determined by the Board of Dentistry. Registered dental hygienists have always been concerned about containment and alleviation of pain. To put this in statute is a natural progression.

We are pleased to have the support of the Michigan Dental Association as well as the Michigan Nurse's Association in this initiative.

Thank you for careful consideration of my testimony.

Please vote in favor of sending HB 5025 to the full House.

Bonnie Nothoff RDH,
Director of Governmental Affairs
Michigan Dental Hygienists' Association